



Arizona Game and Fish Department

Wildlife Matters

Legislative Monthly

July 2007

Volume V,
Issue 7



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OUI Wolf Pack



Legislative Tours Underway!

The 2007 Summer Legislative Tour Season is here, and folks are already making their reservations. Please feel free to join us this summer on the field tour of your choice and get an opportunity to see the unique and interesting jobs at the Game and Fish Department. **A tour brochure will be in your inbox shortly!** Some tours include:

- Get Out of the Heat Wildlife Viewing Tour
- Endangered Species Tour
- Law Enforcement Patrols
- Wildlife Habitat Tour
- "I Want to Learn How to ?" Tour
- Create Your Own Tour

Wolfpack taking place on Lake Pleasant July 3rd.

Interested in attending??? Call 602-789-3533

As part of an ongoing effort to make Arizona's waterways safer for everyone, the Arizona Game and Fish Department, in cooperation with other law enforcement agencies, will operate a Wolfpack Patrol at Lake Pleasant this July 3rd to apprehend boat operators who are impaired by alcohol or drugs.

All boat operators stopped will be checked for alcohol impairment and to make sure their watercraft are equipped with proper safety gear, such as life jackets and working fire extinguishers.

State law prohibits the operation of a motorized watercraft with a blood alcohol level of .08 or above.

"The Wolfpack is part of an ongoing effort to enforce the

Bald Eagle Recovers



law, educate people and create a safer boating environment," says Kevin Bergersen, boating law administrator for the Arizona Game and Fish Department.

Bald Eagle Recovers!

Federal government removes bald eagles from Endangered Species List

Looking back nearly 30 years ago, skeptics said it could not be done. The notion of recovering a population of just 11 bald eagle pairs in Arizona to the point where they could be removed from the federal list of threatened and endangered species was considered unthinkable.



Since the bald eagle's listing in 1978 under the Endangered Species Act, federal, state, and local agencies, Native American tribes, and private organizations in our state have teamed together for one common goal: to recover this magnificent bird in Arizona.

"Today we not only celebrate the recovery of the bald eagle, but the efforts of our cooperators that brought us to this point in Arizona," says Duane Shroufe, director of the Arizona Game and Fish Department.

Secretary of the Interior Dirk Kempthorne today announced the delisting of the bald eagle from its "threatened" status, removing it from the Endangered Species Act. With delisting, the bald eagle becomes the primary public trust responsibility of the state wildlife agencies. Although delisting removes the bald eagle from the Endangered Species Act, five federal laws and the Arizona Revised Statutes Title 17 still offer adequate protection for the species in Arizona.

"The Arizona Game and Fish Department is dedicated to continuing the management programs that have worked so well over the past 20 years," Shroufe stated. "Congressionally allocated State Wildlife Grants and Arizona voter-approved Heritage funds will be the mainstay of our management for this species. The state's Heritage Fund once again will prove "Lottery Dollars Working for Wildlife" is both an affirmation of public



support for such efforts, and a way to protect crucial elements of the environmental quality of life that Arizonans cherish."

After the Southwest Region's Recovery Plan was written in 1982, six agencies met to discuss how to manage the bald eagles in Arizona, which occur across many jurisdictional boundaries. The result was the formation of the Southwestern Bald Eagle Management Committee (SWBEMC). The SWBEMC fostered a relationship of cooperation through the sharing of knowledge and resources to identify the population size and limit the threats to recovery.

Currently, the SWBEMC meets twice a year and has grown to 22 representative agencies. These include: Arizona Game and Fish Department, Arizona Department of Transportation, Arizona Public Service, Arizona State Parks, Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation, Luke Air Force Base, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department, National Park Service, Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community, Salt River Project, San Carlos Apache Tribe, Tonto Apache Tribe, GeoMarine Incorporated, The Navajo Nation, The Hopi Tribe, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the White Mountain Apache Tribe.

Together, they put in place one of the most comprehensive and proactive management strategies for any listed species. Among the actions:

- To document the distribution of bald eagles on their lands, the U.S. Forest Service began ground surveys for the species in the late 1970s. However, Arizona's rugged terrain and steep canyons limited these efforts. The SWBEMC pooled resources and, with the help of Arizona Public Service, Salt River Project, and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, started helicopters surveys in 1985. The result was accurate documentation of productivity and the discovery of 53 breeding areas by 2007.
- In 1978, the U.S. Forest Service started the Arizona Bald Eagle Nestwatch Program. The program at that time was a two-person effort by Maricopa Audubon Society volunteers to monitor a nest near Bartlett Lake. The purpose was to monitor the bald eagle nest, document human activity, and educate the



AZ Bald Eagles

public about bald eagles' sensitivity to disturbance during the breeding cycle. Now, the Arizona Game and Fish Department coordinates this program, with funding assistance from the SWBEMC members, contracting over 20 biologists annually and monitoring bald eagle nests statewide.

- The SWBEMC also began to collect information and implement management practices to identify and alleviate the factors impeding bald eagle population growth. These included: seasonal closures within bald eagle breeding areas to limit human activity during sensitive stages of the breeding cycle; a banding and visual identification study to assess survivorship; winter surveys to identify important wintering habitats; and a contaminant study to monitor the occurrences of chemicals that caused the greatest population declines.

More than 20 years of protective management in Arizona have led to a population increase from 22 bald eagles when the species was listed, to more than 96 in 2007.

In 2007, the Arizona Game and Fish Department solidified these strategies in a document that will guide management well into the future. The Conservation Assessment and Strategy for the Bald Eagle in Arizona not only describes the results of past management efforts, but the current status of the species, and what may still be limiting growth of the Arizona population. Many members of the Southwestern Bald Eagle Management Committee committed to following these guidelines by signing a Memorandum of Understanding on January 24, 2007.

In the late 1800s, the nationwide population of about 250,000 bald eagles began to decline when they were shot for feathers and trophies. In the early 1900s, the loss of the great bison herds affected the eagles' prey base, and secondary poisoning of livestock to control predators extirpated bald eagle populations in some parts of their range. However, the largest decline occurred during the post-World War II use of insecticides. Accumulation of DDT in bald eagles reduced egg thickness to the point of fracture, resulting in large reproductive losses.

In 1963, only 417 breeding pairs of bald eagles existed in the contiguous United States. Concerns about the bald eagle resulted in its protection in 1967 under the Endangered Species Preservation Act, a precursor to the Endangered Species Act. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

July Events



now estimates there are more than 9,789 pairs of bald eagles in the lower 48 states.

"The Arizona Game and Fish Department is proud of the cooperative efforts that have aided the bald eagle in Arizona, and we look forward to continuing our commitment to these conservation efforts," says Shroufe.

July Happenings

July 1

9:30 a.m. til 3:00 p.m.

Dragonfly Walk -- July "Sunday Bonus" Tour

The Queen Creek Riparian corridor and Ayer Lake are great places to view Red Rock Skimmers, Blue-eyed Darners and various other species of these insect predators. Parents and kids can learn to identify colorful dragonfly species during a one-hour walk, which begins at 9:30 a.m. from the Visitor Center lobby. Bring binoculars! See dragonfly photos and read more online. Boyce Thompson Arboretum.

July 7, 14, 21 & 28, 2007

7:30 a.m.

Arboretum at Flagstaff Birdwalks

Find out why The Arboretum is such a great place for birdwatching on one of the Saturday Morning Birdwalks. Volunteer guides from the Audubon Society will help visitors to identify many migratory and resident species of birds that enjoy the pond and plant diversity in the gardens. Visit www.thearb.org for more information.

July 7, 2007

6 - 8 p.m.

Backyard Birding Basics

Suzanne Sitko, White Mountains Program Manager for The Nature Conservancy and Audubon member, will share valuable tips on identifying and learning about your backyard avian visitors. She'll also discuss how to design and landscape your yard to attract birds. This program is part of the Summer Wildlife Speaker Series presented every Saturday evening, from June 30 through August 11, at the AGFD Pinetop regional office. We have scheduled several outstanding speakers to present informative, entertaining programs on a variety of Arizona wildlife species and subjects that will educate and impress audiences of all ages. The Pinetop office is located at 2878 E. White Mountain Blvd. in Pinetop. There is no admission cost, but seating is limited and on a first-come, first-served basis. Contact the office at (928) 367-4281 for questions or additional information.

July 7

9:30 a.m. til 3:00 p.m.



July 7 Saturday Dragonfly Walk

The Queen Creek Riparian corridor and Ayer Lake are great places to view Red Rock Skimmers, Blue-eyed Darners and various other species of these insect predators. Parents and kids can learn to identify colorful dragonfly species during a one-hour walk, which begins at 9:30 a.m. from the Visitor Center lobby. Bring binoculars! See dragonfly photos and read more online.

July 11, 2007

7:00 pm

Predator Calling

The Phoenix Varmint Callers will hold their monthly meeting at 12851 N. 19th Ave., Lodge #2, Phoenix, AZ. Predator-calling demo included. Public is welcome. For more information please visit our website www.pvci.org.

July 14, 2007

6 - 8 p.m.

Wildlife Adaptations

Biologist Randy Babb will profile some of Arizona's unique, lesser known wildlife, and explain their behaviors and adaptations for survival in Arizona's harsh and varied climates. You won't want to miss this quality program. This program is part of the Summer Wildlife Speaker Series presented every Saturday evening, from June 30 through August 11, at the AGFD Pinetop regional office. We have scheduled several outstanding speakers to present informative, entertaining programs on a variety of Arizona wildlife species and subjects that will educate and impress audiences of all ages. The Pinetop office is located at 2878 E. White Mountain Blvd. in Pinetop. There is no admission cost, but seating is limited and on a first-come, first-served basis. Contact the office at (928) 367-4281 for questions or additional information.

July 14

8:30 a.m.

Learn-Your-Lizards Guided Walk

Why do Arizona lizards do "pushups" to display their azure abdomens? On the second Saturday of each month this Summer participants can observe this unique behavior and learn why lizards have blue bellies and other Sonoran desert adaptations during our guided "Learn Your Lizards" walk: July 14, August 11 and September 8. We also have one special "Sunday Bonus" lizard walk tour at 9:30 a.m. September 2. Tours usually last about 90 minutes and proceed along the Main Trail. Carry binoculars for great close-up views of these engaging little reptiles, carry a water bottle and wear sunscreen and a hat. To read more about this tour. Boyce Thompson Arboretum.

July 21, 2007

4:00 p.m.

Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation Big Game Banquet

The Prescott\Quad Cities Chapter of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation will host the annual Big Game Banquet/Fundraiser on July 21, 2007 at Tim's Toyota Center in Prescott Valley. The event doors will open at 4:00 p.m. for cocktails and a preview of the auction items. You will

also have an opportunity to view the "400 Club Elk Display" and hear the elk calling contest. For ticket information contact Julie Pittman at (928) 636-8990. For information concerning the elk calling contest, contact Jeff Dysinger at (928) 856-1034 or visit rmef.org.

July 21, 2007

6 - 8 p.m.

Arizona's Wild Turkeys

Before he became the Department's Big Game Supervisor, Brian Wakeling spent countless hours researching and following wild turkeys in the field. Another of the agency's quality speakers, Brian will summarize all those years of behavioral study at this evening's program. This program is part of the Summer Wildlife Speaker Series presented every Saturday evening, from June 30 through August 11, at the AGFD Pinetop regional office. We have scheduled several outstanding speakers to present informative, entertaining programs on a variety of Arizona wildlife species and subjects that will educate and impress audiences of all ages. The Pinetop office is located at 2878 E. White Mountain Blvd. in Pinetop. There is no admission cost, but seating is limited and on a first-come, first-served basis. Contact the office at (928) 367-4281 for questions or additional information

July 21, 2007

12:00 pm

Annual Arizona State Varmint Calling Contest

The Phoenix Varmint Callers will hold their Annual State Varmint Calling Contest on July 21, 2007 at the Gila County Fairgrounds in Globe, AZ during the Arizona Trappers Association (ATA) Convention. All predator callers are welcome to compete. Free to enter. See www.pvci.org for more information.

July 28

9:30 a.m.

July Butterfly Guided Walk

Bring your binoculars for dazzling close-up looks at colorful species such as Queen, Painted Lady and Pipevine Swallowtail during this guided outing with Education Coordinator Chris Kline or Arizona State Parks volunteer naturalists. A few butterflies will be captured for kids to have close-up looks at these insects during the tour - so bring your camera, too! Meet at the Visitor Center at 9:30 a.m.

July 28, 2007

7:30 a.m. - noon

"High Country Hummers"

The Arizona Game and Fish Department is again offering a unique opportunity for people to learn more about Arizona's hummingbirds at the 5th annual High Country Hummers event. On Saturday, July 28, Sheri Williamson, one of the nation's foremost experts on hummingbirds, will conduct a capture and bird-banding event that is free and open to the public at the department's Sipe White Mountain Wildlife Area in eastern Arizona. This is a fantastic opportunity for people to get up close and personal with these flying jewels. We are quite fortunate to be able to get Sheri, who is the author of the Peterson Field Guide to Hummingbirds of

North America, to come to our part of the state to demonstrate her research. Observers will be able to interact with her one-on-one as they watch her capture, measure, weigh and band birds. They will also be able to use a stethoscope to hear a hummingbird's heart beat more than 200 times a minute. Other fun programs will be offered at the wildlife area that day. There will be exhibits featuring live hawks, owls and reptiles. White Mountain Audubon Chapter members will lead a bird walk on one of the hiking trails on the Sipe property. Visitors can also view a slide presentation on hummingbird natural history. Plus, people are welcome to explore the visitor center's interpretive displays on wildlife, habitats, prehistoric culture and conservation. Come prepared to spend most of the morning outdoors. It's a good idea to bring your own food and water, as well as a camera and binoculars. The Sipe Wildlife Area is located southeast of Eagar and Springerville. From Eagar, take Highway 191 toward Alpine for about two miles to the signed turnoff at the top of the first hill. Drive about five miles, on a dirt road suitable for passenger cars, to the Sipe property. For more information on this special event, contact the Pinetop Game and Fish office at (928) 367-4281.



For additional information about *Wildlife Matters* Legislative Publication contact:

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Department Staff have contributed to this publication in the form of articles and photographs.

July 2, 2007



Wildlife Matters
Legislative Affairs